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DOH-OKALOOSA HONORED FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Local Health Department Program is One of 41 Nationwide to Receive a “Model Practice Award” in 2017

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Fort Walton Beach, Fla — Earlier this month, the Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) was honored with the Model Practice Award at the 2017 Annual Conference of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The award celebrates local health departments for developing programs that demonstrate exemplary and replicable best practices in response to a critical local public health need.

The “Integrating Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Services into a Clinical Work Environment for HIV Prevention” program was one of 41 local health department programs to receive NACCHO’s prestigious Model Practice Award.

This local model practice focuses on providing PrEP medication to the public through the DOH-Okaloosa clinics. PrEP is proven to help prevent HIV infection among individuals who are at significant risk by taking a pill every day. The pill currently approved for PrEP is called Truvada.

“We are proud to receive NACCHO’s Model Practice Award and share the good work DOH-Okaloosa is doing with other county health departments around the country,” stated Dr. Karen A. Chapman, Director of DOH-Okaloosa. “Acquiring HIV is completely preventable, and this local service shows our commitment to reducing HIV infections. Any person who thinks they might be at risk for getting an HIV infection should ask their doctor for an HIV test and about PrEP. If your doctor is not familiar with PrEP, DOH-Okaloosa serves both insured and uninsured people for this service.”

Since 2003, NACCHO’s Model Practice Awards have honored programs, resources, and tools that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health challenges. Each innovative project receiving the Model Practice Award was peer-reviewed and selected from a competitive group of over 100 applicants.

“This award puts DOH-Okaloosa in special company with a select group of health departments that exemplify a forward-thinking, proactive approach toward protecting and promoting the health of communities nationwide,” said NACCHO Interim Executive Director and Chief of Government Affairs Laura Hanen, MPP.

“Integrating Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Services into a Clinical Work Environment for HIV Prevention” is now part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas that range from immunization and maternal and child health, to infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. The NACCHO Model Practice database allows local health departments, public health partners, and other important stakeholders to learn about the good

work being done by local health departments across the country. The database also provides users an opportunity to learn from best practices and what resources are needed to implement comparable programs in other jurisdictions that produce results.

Read more about these award-winning programs at <https://application.naccho.org/Public/Applications/Search>

About the National Association of County and City Health Officials

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's 2,800 local governmental health departments. These cities, counties, metropolitan, district and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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